



SAFETY BULLETIN

SAFETY ALERT: EXTENSION CORDS

Recent inspections of City properties have found the frequent use of extension cords to power everything from surge protectors to computers. Most people do not understand the danger of using extension cords and the fire hazard that they employ. Extension cords can overheat and ignite combustible materials in their vicinity. Extension cords are prohibited in the work environment when they are used as a permanent replacement for fixed wiring. In other words, extension cords should never be under an electrical load at all times.

Regulations regarding Extension Cords:

The Uniform Fire Code (Article 85), the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), and Cal/OSHA (Title 8, section 2500.8) regulate the use of extension cords in workplaces. These standards state:

1. Extension cords are **not to be used as a permanent replacement for fixed wiring**.
2. The amperage or **load** placed on an electrical conductor (the extension cord) cannot be greater than the maximum amperage rating of the conductor.
3. Extension cords **must not be concealed** under or behind materials, especially combustible or conductive materials.

Remember, extension cords may be used, but **only for temporary uses**, such as the temporary use of a VCR/TV, a laptop, vacuum, or a coffee pot for a meeting. The extension cord must be promptly unplugged once the appliance is no longer in use.

If you find that you have an extension cord at your desk or shop, report it to your supervisor for immediate correction.

If you have any questions, please contact the City Safety Officer at X86476.